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Metro Library Offers Two More 'Tools' to Help in Data Searches

By MATT BARRETT

(Feb. 22, 2005) The Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library has just released two additional search tools employees can use to find transportation data, historical documents, Board reports and other information on myMetro.net and the Internet.

In addition to the standard Library Catalog, the TLCat Catalog and the Metro Words on-line Dictionary, employees can now access the History Archives Catalog and the Google-powered Board Actions Archive via the intranet on the Research Center/Library page, <http://intranet1/dept/mtalibrary/>.

Each of these tools, found on the Research/Library site under Search Tools, provides employees with desktop access to a wealth of additional electronic information sources.

The History Archives Catalog contains about 50,000 records, or about a fourth of the archives' contents, which document Los Angeles transportation history from 1873 to the present.

Variety of collections

Each of the predecessor transit agencies, both public and private, handed down collections of photographs, reports, studies, franchise agreements, payroll records, contracts, advertising and artifacts that were acquired when they purchased other private operators or were merged with other public agencies.

Historian/Archivist Jim Walker has been cataloging those records to ensure that Metro's historic resources are preserved and documented for generations to come.

Maybe you or your project were featured in an issue of Headway (SCRTD), or your parents in an issue of the Emblem (LAMTA), or your grandparents in an issue of Two Bells (Los Angeles Railway). Those resources, along with many others are now searchable on line. In a long-term project, the Library plans to digitize many of the key reports, photos and publications, and expand viewable access to these irreplaceable resources.

CHECK IT OUT:

- **Library Catalog** - Search the main collection of transportation research collection, search the Learning Resource Center collection, or both simultaneously.
- **TLCat** - Search 20 transportation libraries simultaneously, a project sponsored by the U.S. DOT's National Transportation Library.
- **Metro Words Dictionary** - Search acronyms and transportation terminology.
- **History Archives Catalog** - Search historical documents, photographs, and artifacts.
- **Board Action Archive using Google** - Find board reports, minutes, agendas and more.

The History Archives catalog is also available via <http://www.metro.net/library> to allow academics, journalists, historians and the media industry to search to our collections. Whether its a film studio's costume shop documenting bus operator uniform details, or the 1950s era Los Angeles monorail plans for a documentary, or a historian looking for LA's first subway plan from 1915, the archives have the information.

Full text of reports

The Board of Directors Action Archive allows employees to search through the full text of LACMTA board reports, agendas, minutes and "Board Box" reports, as well as reports on the service sectors and other Board organizations like the Bus Operations Subcommittee, PTSC and SAFE.

Having these reports available and searchable gives users the ability to research public policy and procurement issues, find examples, trace progress and explore current and past decisions from their desktop computer.

The full text of Board meeting minutes of the predecessor agencies – SCRTD, LACTC and RCC – are also there. In total, about 30,000 records have been digitized so far.

The Library is continuing to work backwards in time, scanning additional files as they are obtained from paper and microfilm sources.

The goal is to go back as many years as possible to have a complete digitally accessible archive of Board actions from the beginning of public oversight and operation of Los Angeles' transportation system from 1958 to the present. This system is currently only available to intranet users.